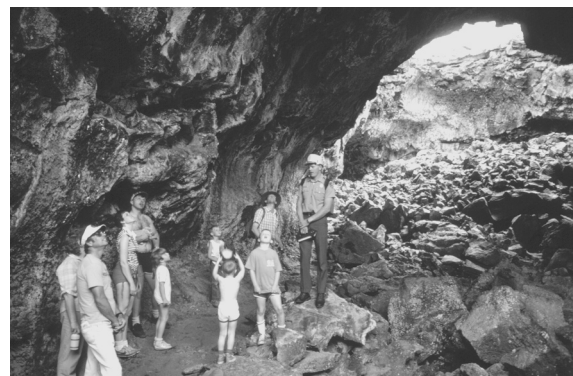


Visitor Services Project

# Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve

## Visitor Study

Summer 2004



NPS Photo

For more information, please contact:

Superintendent  
Craters of the Moon National Monument  
& Preserve  
P.O. Box 29  
Arco, Idaho 83213

Complete results are available on the  
following website:  
[www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.reports](http://www.psu.uidaho.edu/vsp.reports)



NPS Photo

### INTRODUCTION

A sea of lava flows with scattered islands of cinder cones and sagebrush describes this “weird and scenic landscape” known as Craters of the Moon. Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve contains three major lava fields covering almost half a million acres. These remarkably well preserved volcanic features resulted from geologic events that appear to have happened yesterday and will likely continue tomorrow. In 1924 the National Park Service began the job of protecting the park and welcoming people to experience this area. In 2000 the Monument was expanded to include most of the Great Rift, the source of the lava flows that created this unique landscape. Today’s more than 750,000 acre National Monument and Preserve is co-managed by the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management.

The National Park Service Visitor Services Project, based at the University of Idaho Park Studies Unit, conducted this visitor study from July 10-17, 2004. Out of 512 questionnaires distributed to visitors, 426 were returned for an 83% return rate. The data obtained from this survey helps the National Park Service and the Bureau of Land Management to be more responsive to the needs of visitors. It also provides valuable information for local businesses. This brochure contains a brief summary of the overall study results.

### Who were the visitors?

Craters of the Moon National Monument and Preserve (NM and Pres) came from 43 states and Washington D.C. and 17 other countries. The largest proportions of U.S. visitors were from California (20%), Idaho (13%), and Washington (9%). International visitors comprised 7% of the total visitation. The largest proportions of visitors from foreign countries included Canada (27%), Germany (20%), and Holland (17%). Forty-five percent of all visitors were in the 45-65 age groups and 24% were 15 years or younger, as shown in Figure 1. Most visitor groups (70%) were comprised of family members, while 12% were groups of friends, and 11% traveled alone. Forty-seven percent of visitor groups had two people, 31% had three or four persons, and 15% had five or more group members.

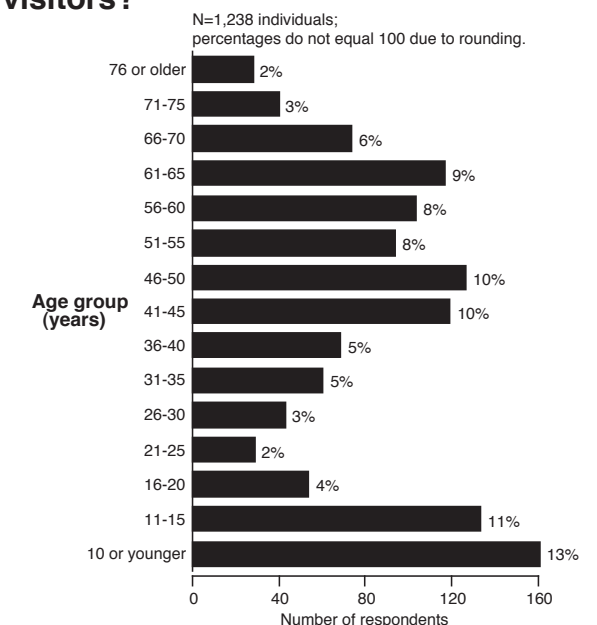


Figure 1: Visitor age groups

Craters of the Moon National  
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### How did visitors learn about Craters of the Moon NM & Pres?

Prior to their visit to Craters of the Moon NM and Pres, most visitor groups (84%) obtained information about the park. The most common source of information that visitor groups used included maps/brochures (51%), travel guide/tour books/other publications (36%), and friends/relatives/word of mouth (33%), as shown in Figure 2. Through these sources, most visitor groups (90%) obtained the information they needed to prepare for their visit.

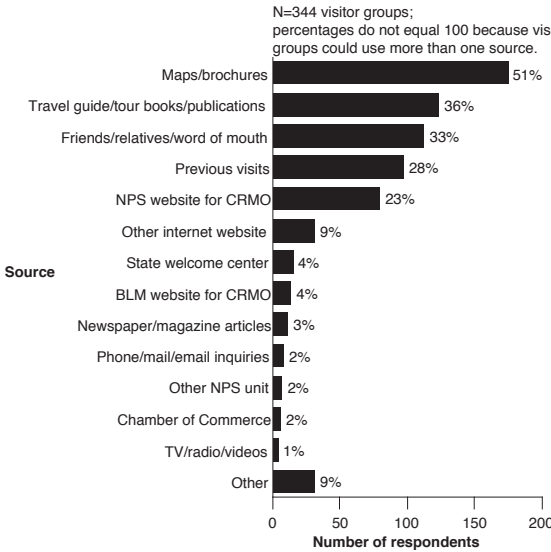


Figure 2: Sources of information used

### What was the primary reason for visiting the area and the park?

Many visitor groups (72%) reported that general sightseeing, followed by geology (9%), and visiting a national monument (9%) were their primary reasons for visiting Craters of the Moon NM and Pres. Visiting other area attractions (42%), visiting Craters of the Moon NM and Pres (27%), and passing through (22%) were the most common reasons for visiting the area (within 1-hour drive).

### What activities did visitors participate?

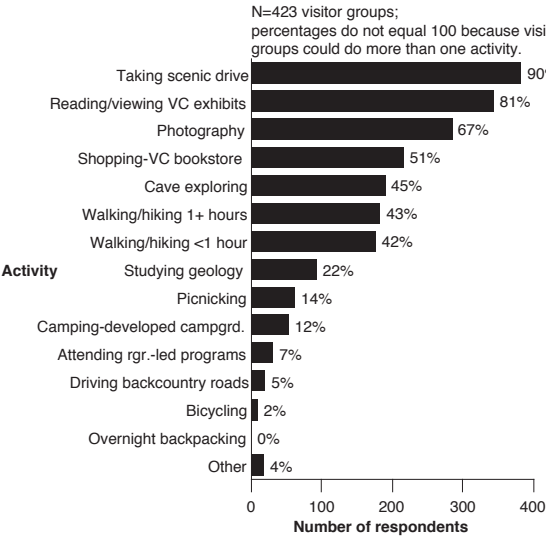


Figure 3: Visitor activities

In Craters of the Moon NM and Pres, the most common activities that visitors participated in during this visit were taking a scenic drive (90%), reading/viewing visitor center exhibits (81%), and photography (67%), as shown in Figure 3.

### What type of accommodation did visitors use?

More than half (59%) of visitor groups did not stay overnight away from home in the area within 1-hour drive of the park. For those who stayed overnight, the most common type of lodging visitors used inside the park was RV/trailer camp (64%). Lodge/motel/cabin, etc. (59%), RV/trailer camp (26%), and tent camping in a developed campground (7%) were the most common types of lodging that visitor groups used to stay overnight in the area within 1-hour drive of the park.

### How much did visitors spend?

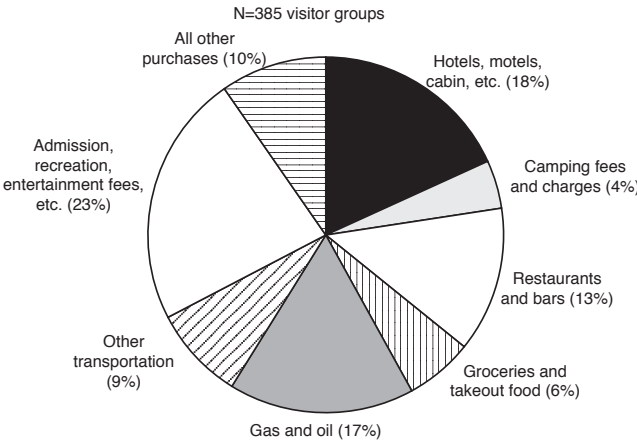


Figure 4: How money was spent

For total expenditures in the park and the surrounding area (within 1-hour drive of the park), 42% of visitor groups spent up to \$50 during their visit and 20% spent between \$51 and \$100. The largest proportions of expenditures was for admission, recreation, and entertainment fee (23%), followed by hotels, motels, etc., (18%), and gas and oil (17%), as shown in Figure 4. The average visitor group expenditure was \$118. The average per capita expenditure was \$38.

### How did visitors rate the overall quality of services and facilities?

Most visitor groups (94%) rated the overall quality of visitor services and facilities at Craters of the Moon NM and Pres as “very good” or “good.” No visitor groups rated the overall quality of services and facilities as “very poor” or “poor.”



PSU Photo

### Visitor comments

The staff was very friendly. The park was very clean and well maintained. We loved our experience!

PRESERVE SENSITIVE ROCK FORMATIONS WITH TRAILS, MAINTAIN HIKING/WALKING TRAILS AND MAINTAIN ACCESS TO CAVES, POSSIBLY EXPAND UPON PRESENTATION OF GEOLOGICAL EDUCATION ITEMS

You might put some covered benches along the trails, so people can stop + rest and get out of the hot sun.